Congress of the United States Washington, DC 20515

January 25, 2018

The Honorable Ajit Pai Chairman Federal Communications Commission 445 12th Street, SW Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Pai:

We write today concerning the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's petition for access to federal broadband funding through the Connect America Fund Phase II (CAF II). It is our understanding that the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has issued a draft order to deny Pennsylvania's petition, which it intends to consider at the January 30, 2018, opening meeting.

As you know, according to the FCC's 2016 Broadband Progress Report, 20 percent of Pennsylvanians living in rural areas do not have access to high-speed internet.

Pennsylvania consumers have long been a major net contributor to Federal Universal Service Fund (USF) programs, consistently ranking fifth in the United States in terms of net USF payments. Furthermore, the FCC's Universal Service Monitoring Report notes that, during the period of 2005 to 2016, Pennsylvania's net contribution to the federal USF totaled in excess of \$1.7 billion. Pennsylvania should see the benefits of the CAF II funds that were rightfully designated for them.

In light of this information, we are asking that the FCC reconsider its pending denial of Pennsylvania's CAF II petition. If this decision is not reversed, we would then ask that the FCC provide its reasoning for denying Pennsylvanians' access to broadband internet and outline what changes must be made in the Commonwealth to secure this critical funding in the future.

Thank you for your thoughtful engagement on this important issue. We appreciate your consideration and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Lou Barletta

Member of Congress

Pat Toomey

United States Senator

Bill Shuster
Bill Shuster

Member of Congress

Lloyd Smucker Member of Congress

Glenn 'GT' Thompson Member of Congress

Patrick Meehan Member of Congress

Brian Fitzpatrick
Member of Congress

Keith Rothfus Member of Congress

Tom Marino

Member of Congress

Ryan Costello

Member of Congress

Scott Perry

Member of Congress

Mike Kelly
Member of Congress



March 14, 2018

The Honorable Bill Shuster U.S. House of Representatives 2079 Rayburn House Office Building Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Shuster:

Thank you for your letter regarding the petition filed by the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission and the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development on the Connect America Fund Phase II (CAF Phase II) competitive bidding process rules.

In my first remarks to FCC staff as Chairman, I declared that my highest priority would be making sure every American who wants high-speed Internet access can get it. Rural Americans deserve the same digital access as those living in urban areas. That is why I am pleased the Commission is moving forward with the CAF Phase II auction in July, taking the necessary steps to kickstart this \$2 billion program. Through that auction, providers in every state will have a full and fair opportunity to bid for funding to build out high-speed Internet access to unserved rural Americans.

I agree with you that far too many rural Pennsylvanians lack broadband access, and I applaud recent state efforts to close the digital divide throughout the Commonwealth. Indeed, we've structured the CAF Phase II auction so states are able to provide matching funds toward broadband deployment over and above the federal funding. If your state did this, such funds would increase the incentive for providers to invest in Pennsylvania and bring new service to those without—likely increasing the quality of service as well as the federal funding for rural parts of the state. Because the petition before the Commission did not explain why such matching efforts were insufficient to accomplish the Commonwealth's goals given our interest in maximizing the effectiveness of our universal service dollars for all Americans, the Commission denied the request in January.

I should note, however, that the CAF Phase II auction is not the only opportunity to ensure broadband reaches all Pennsylvanians. In 2019, we will move on to the Remote Areas Fund for those areas still without high-speed broadband—and we will ensure that any funding originally intended for rural Pennsylvania will be available to build there in that second auction.

I appreciate your interest. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,



March 14, 2018

The Honorable Brian Fitzpatrick U.S. House of Representatives 514 Cannon House Office Building Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Fitzpatrick:

Thank you for your letter regarding the petition filed by the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission and the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development on the Connect America Fund Phase II (CAF Phase II) competitive bidding process rules.

In my first remarks to FCC staff as Chairman, I declared that my highest priority would be making sure every American who wants high-speed Internet access can get it. Rural Americans deserve the same digital access as those living in urban areas. That is why I am pleased the Commission is moving forward with the CAF Phase II auction in July, taking the necessary steps to kickstart this \$2 billion program. Through that auction, providers in every state will have a full and fair opportunity to bid for funding to build out high-speed Internet access to unserved rural Americans.

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March 14, 2018

The Honorable Glenn Thompson U.S. House of Representatives 124 Cannon House Office Building Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Thompson:

Thank you for your letter regarding the petition filed by the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission and the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development on the Connect America Fund Phase II (CAF Phase II) competitive bidding process rules.

In my first remarks to FCC staff as Chairman, I declared that my highest priority would be making sure every American who wants high-speed Internet access can get it. Rural Americans deserve the same digital access as those living in urban areas. That is why I am pleased the Commission is moving forward with the CAF Phase II auction in July, taking the necessary steps to kickstart this \$2 billion program. Through that auction, providers in every state will have a full and fair opportunity to bid for funding to build out high-speed Internet access to unserved rural Americans.

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Sincerely



March 14, 2018

The Honorable Keith Rothfus U.S. House of Representatives 1205 Longworth House Office Building Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Rothfus:

Thank you for your letter regarding the petition filed by the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission and the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development on the Connect America Fund Phase II (CAF Phase II) competitive bidding process rules.

In my first remarks to FCC staff as Chairman, I declared that my highest priority would be making sure every American who wants high-speed Internet access can get it. Rural Americans deserve the same digital access as those living in urban areas. That is why I am pleased the Commission is moving forward with the CAF Phase II auction in July, taking the necessary steps to kickstart this \$2 billion program. Through that auction, providers in every state will have a full and fair opportunity to bid for funding to build out high-speed Internet access to unserved rural Americans.

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I appreciate your interest. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,

Git V. Pai



March 14, 2018

The Honorable Lloyd K. Smucker U.S. House of Representatives 516 Cannon House Office Building Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Smucker:

Thank you for your letter regarding the petition filed by the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission and the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development on the Connect America Fund Phase II (CAF Phase II) competitive bidding process rules.

In my first remarks to FCC staff as Chairman, I declared that my highest priority would be making sure every American who wants high-speed Internet access can get it. Rural Americans deserve the same digital access as those living in urban areas. That is why I am pleased the Commission is moving forward with the CAF Phase II auction in July, taking the necessary steps to kickstart this \$2 billion program. Through that auction, providers in every state will have a full and fair opportunity to bid for funding to build out high-speed Internet access to unserved rural Americans.

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Sincerely,

Git V. Pai



March 14, 2018

The Honorable Lou Barletta U.S. House of Representatives 2049 Rayburn House Office Building Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Barletta:

Thank you for your letter regarding the petition filed by the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission and the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development on the Connect America Fund Phase II (CAF Phase II) competitive bidding process rules.

In my first remarks to FCC staff as Chairman, I declared that my highest priority would be making sure every American who wants high-speed Internet access can get it. Rural Americans deserve the same digital access as those living in urban areas. That is why I am pleased the Commission is moving forward with the CAF Phase II auction in July, taking the necessary steps to kickstart this \$2 billion program. Through that auction, providers in every state will have a full and fair opportunity to bid for funding to build out high-speed Internet access to unserved rural Americans.

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I appreciate your interest. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.



March 14, 2018

The Honorable Mike Kelly U.S. House of Representatives 1707 Longworth House Office Building Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Kelly:

Thank you for your letter regarding the petition filed by the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission and the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development on the Connect America Fund Phase II (CAF Phase II) competitive bidding process rules.

In my first remarks to FCC staff as Chairman, I declared that my highest priority would be making sure every American who wants high-speed Internet access can get it. Rural Americans deserve the same digital access as those living in urban areas. That is why I am pleased the Commission is moving forward with the CAF Phase II auction in July, taking the necessary steps to kickstart this \$2 billion program. Through that auction, providers in every state will have a full and fair opportunity to bid for funding to build out high-speed Internet access to unserved rural Americans.

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Sincerely,

Git V. Pai



March 14, 2018

The Honorable Patrick Meehan U.S. House of Representatives 2305 Rayburn House Office Building Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Meehan:

Thank you for your letter regarding the petition filed by the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission and the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development on the Connect America Fund Phase II (CAF Phase II) competitive bidding process rules.

In my first remarks to FCC staff as Chairman, I declared that my highest priority would be making sure every American who wants high-speed Internet access can get it. Rural Americans deserve the same digital access as those living in urban areas. That is why I am pleased the Commission is moving forward with the CAF Phase II auction in July, taking the necessary steps to kickstart this \$2 billion program. Through that auction, providers in every state will have a full and fair opportunity to bid for funding to build out high-speed Internet access to unserved rural Americans.

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Sincerely,

Fix V. Pai



March 14, 2018

The Honorable Patrick J. Toomey United States Senate 248 Russell Senate Office Building Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Congressman Toomey:

Thank you for your letter regarding the petition filed by the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission and the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development on the Connect America Fund Phase II (CAF Phase II) competitive bidding process rules.

In my first remarks to FCC staff as Chairman, I declared that my highest priority would be making sure every American who wants high-speed Internet access can get it. Rural Americans deserve the same digital access as those living in urban areas. That is why I am pleased the Commission is moving forward with the CAF Phase II auction in July, taking the necessary steps to kickstart this \$2 billion program. Through that auction, providers in every state will have a full and fair opportunity to bid for funding to build out high-speed Internet access to unserved rural Americans.

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March 14, 2018

The Honorable Ryan Costello U.S. House of Representatives 326 Cannon House Office Building Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Costello:

Thank you for your letter regarding the petition filed by the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission and the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development on the Connect America Fund Phase II (CAF Phase II) competitive bidding process rules.

In my first remarks to FCC staff as Chairman, I declared that my highest priority would be making sure every American who wants high-speed Internet access can get it. Rural Americans deserve the same digital access as those living in urban areas. That is why I am pleased the Commission is moving forward with the CAF Phase II auction in July, taking the necessary steps to kickstart this \$2 billion program. Through that auction, providers in every state will have a full and fair opportunity to bid for funding to build out high-speed Internet access to unserved rural Americans.

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Sincerely,

Aiit V. Pai

P.S. Congressman, great to see you recently!



March 14, 2018

The Honorable Scott Perry U.S. House of Representatives 1207 Longworth House Office Building Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Perry:

Thank you for your letter regarding the petition filed by the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission and the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development on the Connect America Fund Phase II (CAF Phase II) competitive bidding process rules.

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Ajit V. Pai



March 14, 2018

The Honorable Tom Marino
U.S. House of Representatives
2242 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Marino:

Thank you for your letter regarding the petition filed by the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission and the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development on the Connect America Fund Phase II (CAF Phase II) competitive bidding process rules.

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